



MHSOAC Communications Draft Work Plan

- I. MHSOAC Mission
 - a. Provide the vision and leadership, in collaboration with clients, their family members, and underserved communities, to ensure Californians understand mental health is essential to overall health; and to hold public systems accountable and provide oversight for eliminating disparities, promoting wellness, recovery and resiliency and ensuring positive outcomes for individuals living with serious mental illness and their families.
- II. Communications Roles and Responsibilities
 - a. Assist in transforming California's mental health system into one of client and family empowerment.
 - b. Assist in expanding successful and innovative programs by communicating their stories to the public.
 - c. Assist in serving the underserved with cultural and linguistic competence by communication and outreach to communities.
 - d. Assist in reducing stigma and discrimination by communicating messages to the public that promote understanding, acceptance and support, as well as encouraging coverage through the media that promotes the same.
 - e. Assist in ensuring oversight and accountability through research and dissemination of information, and by making public the successes and challenges of the implementation of the MHSA.
- III. Communications Goals
 - a. The Communications goals of the MHSOAC will seek to help address the overall goals of the MHSA as outlined in the Act's Section 5840 (d)(1-7):
 - i. A reduction in suicide.
 - ii. A reduction in incarceration.
 - iii. A reduction in school failure.
 - iv. A reduction in unemployment
 - v. A reduction in prolonged suffering
 - vi. A reduction in homelessness
 - vii. A reduction in removal of children from their homes

IV. Long Term Strategy

- a. Assist in ensuring transparency by communication with and education of the public.
- b. Assist commissioners and MHSOAC by developing issue briefs.
- c. Work in collaboration with MHSOAC partners and stakeholders to develop answers to the public's questions regarding the implementation of the MHSA and the Commission's oversight and accountability role.

V. Short Term Activities

- a. Keep Commission Informed
 - i. Commission Newsletter
 - 1. Publish Quarterly (first edition already published), with goals as stated in the Interim Executive Director's letter to commissioners in the April 2008 first edition.
- b. Keep Public, Commissioners and Stakeholders Informed
 - i. Public Newsletter
 - 1. Publish Quarterly (alternating every two months with Commission Newsletter), with the goal of communicating progress of the MHSOAC in its supportive role in implementing the MHSA.
- c. Website
 - i. Launch by end of August 2008, with the goal of presenting to the public a more user-friendly, easily accessible information structure and design.
- d. Motto

In order to help the public understand our mission, the communications unit will be doing some thinking about developing a motto, or at-a-glance message, such as "Building Better Mental Health" or other options offered by commissioners or staff.
- e. Press Events

As opportunity arises from MHSOAC activities, the communications unit will invite the press to cover these activities and/or press conferences to help spread the message of positive results of the MHSA.

f. Press Releases

The communications unit will compose and send out press releases as well as maintain relationships with members of the press with the aim of encouraging coverage of positive results of the MHSA and activities of the MHSOAC.

g. Develop MHSOAC Informational Material

The communications unit will develop, design, write and produce brochures, and fact sheets to help the public understand the mission of the MHSOAC, and to assist Commissioners and staff with informing the public of the same.

h. Develop plan for a “speaker’s bureau,” for commissioners, staff.

VI. Organizational Structure

a. Chief of Communications and Outreach

i. Associate Mental Health Specialist

1. Staff Services Analyst

a. Student Intern

b. Student Intern

VII. For Future Options and Considerations:

a. We offer another proposed means of communication stakeholder outreach as a possible item for discussion, but not for vote with this year’s Communications Draft Work Plan.

i. This proposal is to develop educational outreach materials for, and utilize, a public outreach mobile bus unit to deliver information and public education to underserved communities. This unit would also be effective as a tool to assist the MHSOAC in its charge of oversight and accountability by gathering feedback from stakeholders and other community members.